

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR 1920.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL
OF TURTON.

GENTLEMEN,

Lane

I have the honour of submitting my fortieth Annual Report on the Health and Sanitary condition of the Urban District of Turton, together with a summary of sanitary work during the year 1920.

The total number of births registered during the year was two hundred and thirteen—males, one hundred and thirteen; females, one hundred; equivalent to a rate of 17·1 per thousand upon an estimated population at the middle period of the year of 12,439. As the rate for the year 1919 was 12·1, an increase of 5·0 per thousand is exhibited and an increase of 2·5 upon the mean of the preceding ten years. The birth rate in your district, although relatively higher during the past year, is still lower than the normal and so much as 8·3 per thousand below the rate for the whole of England and Wales.

There were nine illegitimate births as against four during the previous year.

The total number of deaths recorded during the year was one hundred and seventy-two—males, eighty-two; females, ninety; equivalent to a rate of 13·8 per thousand of the population estimated as at the middle period of year of 12,439. The rate for the year is 0·4 per thousand above that for the previous year and 1·1 per thousand over the rate for the preceding ten years. In comparison with the whole of England and Wales it is 1·4 per thousand higher. The increased death rate is probably accidental and temporary only, as a review of the causes of death during the year shows that the increase is not due to diseases of a preventable character.

There were eighteen deaths of children under one year of age as against ten during the year 1919, the equivalent rates being eighty-four and sixty-six per thousand births, exhibiting an increase during the past year of eighteen per thousand and an increase of four upon the mean of

the preceding ten years, as well as an increase of four per thousand over the rate for the whole of England and Wales. As in the case of the general death rate the same criticism will apply as the increase in the number of deaths is not due to diseases of a preventable nature or the resultant of insanitary conditions. Bronchitis, pneumonia and broncho-pneumonia have increased the death rate of adults as well as of children under one year in age.

Respiratory diseases (bronchitis, pneumonia, &c.) caused thirty-three deaths as against twenty-six during the previous year, the equivalent rates being 2·6 and 2·1 respectively.

Epidemic diseases caused four deaths only, or a rate of 0·32 per thousand, a decrease of 0·1 upon the previous year's record and 0·16 less than the mean of the preceding ten years.

Pulmonary Phthisis contributed seven deaths, or an equivalent rate of 0·56, an increase of 0·15 upon that of the previous year, but a decrease of 0·18 upon the mean of the preceding ten years.

The total number of cases of infectious diseases notified during the year was eighty-one, as against fifty-seven during the previous year, the increase being due to an unusually large number of cases of diphtheria.

The number and details of each form notified are as follows—

SCARLET FEVER.—24 cases. No deaths.

Three cases were contracted outside the district at Picture Palaces and other places of entertainment, four from contact at school, five were due to previous cases in the neighbourhood, but no satisfactory cause of origin of the remainder could be discovered.

DIPHTHERIA.—33 cases. No deaths.

Two cases were contracted outside the district, two from contact with a visitor from Darwen, three from contact at school, eighteen were traced to previous cases in the district or in the home, whilst for the remainder, no satisfactory source of origin could be discovered.

ERYSIPELAS.—6 cases. No deaths.

The houses and premises were inspected, but no insanitary conditions were found.

TUBERCULOUS DISEASES.—Pulmonary tuberculosis. 4 new cases. 7 deaths.

Other forms of Tuberculosis. 8 cases. 2 deaths.

All the cases of Tuberculosis were visited, their social circumstances noted, the domiciliary arrangements ascertained and the sanitary condition of the houses and premises investigated. Sanitary defects where found to exist were removed, advice was given as to general regimen and auxiliary assistance was afforded if necessary. After the removal or death of affected persons fumigation and disinfection were carried out in all cases.

Measles was prevalent in various parts of the district during the first half of the year. In Egerton it appeared in January and continued until April, it was present from March to May in Eagley and Bradshaw, in Edgworth during May and June, and in Chapeltown during June and July. One death was recorded.

Whooping cough was prevalent in the district, chiefly in Egerton, during November and December. No deaths were recorded.

The sanitary condition of the schools in the district was investigated at regular intervals. The quality and sufficiency of the water supply was satisfactory.

The milk supply was under regular supervision. Statutory Regulations are desirable for the better control of milkers and other persons associated with the distribution of milk, to ensure soundness and the maintenance of a high standard of purity.

The water supply of the district was satisfactory in quality and sufficiency. Samples of water were periodically taken and submitted for analysis. During the early months of the year slight lead erosive action was reported, but after the month of May it had quite disappeared and did not subsequently recur. On one occasion the water at the Blair Hospital was found to have an excess of iron acquired from the storage tank. Flushing of the tank at regular intervals was recommended.

Your district is not provided with a separate Isolation Hospital, but suitable and efficient arrangements have been made with the Bury and Ainsworth Hospital Authorities for the admission of an unlimited number of cases of Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria, and a reserve of two beds for Small-pox cases as well as for the stoving and disinfection of clothing, bedding, &c. This arrangement has hitherto been quite sufficient and has worked very satisfactorily.

The maintenance of the highways and secondary roads in good repair has been satisfactory.

Work under the Housing and Town Planning Act has been resumed and is as follows—

Number of Inspections	..	....	....	65
„ Re-inspections	....	...	....	34
„ Statutory notices issued	....	....		2
„ Preliminary notices issued	...	...		5
„ Preliminary notices work attended to		...		4
„ „ „ „ in progress		...		1
„ Statutory „ „ „		...		2

Contracts have been made for the erection of fifty-six houses on the Oaks Estate and the work is in progress.

EXCRETA DISPOSAL.—The scavenging of the whole district is performed under the control of the Council and was satisfactorily carried out.

The methods of excreta disposal were as follows—Privy Middens, 763; Pail Closets, 88; Dry Ashpits, 1155; Portable Receptacles for Refuse, 135; Fresh Water Closets, 822; Waste Water Closets, 1154.

There were forty-three conversions of privy middens to fresh water closets and ten conversions to pail closets.

All new houses are now provided with fresh water closets.

SCAVENGING. ASHPITS, PRIVIES, &C.

Number of Ashpits cleansed	...	....	....	5940
„ Defective ashpits	....	....	....	55
„ Privies and ashpits repaired	....	....		53
„ Dry ash-houses substituted	....	....		13
„ Ash-bins substituted for deep wet ashpits	....			20
„ Waste water closets choked	....	....		48
„ Fresh water closets choked	....	....		55

WORKSHOPS.—Registered, 34. Inspections, 85.

Notices issued for whitewashing, 4; drains trapped, repaired or reconstructed, 5; other sanitary defects removed, 5. All the

regulations in respect of ventilation, air space, &c., were observed. All the workshops were kept in a clean and sanitary condition.

DOMESTIC WORKSHOPS.—Registered, 7. Inspections, 25.

All were in a clean and sanitary condition.

Two complaints were received from H.M. Inspector of Factories relative to defective closet accommodation, which were duly attended to.

DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS.—Registered dairies, 105. Cowsheds, 178.

Inspections, 566. All had been properly and regularly white-washed. Notices issued to owners, 8. Notices issued to tenants, 12. Dairies repaired, 5. Floors of cowsheds repaired, &c., 10. Defective drains repaired, trapped or reconstructed, 14. New water supply, 2. Water supply improved, 5. Improved light and ventilation, 3.

Two cases of Anthrax in cows were reported in September and in December. All precautionary measures were adopted in both instances and there was no further extension of the disease.

SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.—Registered, 9. Inspections, 290.

They were all found to be in a clean and sanitary condition. Four notices which were duly attended to were issued.

BAKE-HOUSES.—Registered, 19. Inspections, 67.

All had been whitewashed and were in a satisfactory condition. Drains reconstructed, repaired, &c., 8. Ten notices, which were duly attended to, were issued to tenants or owners.

FRIED FISH AND CHIPPED POTATO SHOPS.—Registered, 7. Inspections, 40.

One drain was repaired, but with this exception they were found to be in a good sanitary condition.

TENTS, VANS, ETC., USED AS DWELLINGS.

There were sixteen van dwellings and four tent dwellings in the district at various periods during the year. They were all inspected

periodically and found in a satisfactory condition and the sanitary regulations properly observed.

SMOKE OBSERVATIONS.

On seventy-five occasions observations were made. No legal proceedings were necessary.

The following is a summary of the sanitary work performed during the year—

Inspections made	....	....	....	1736
Re-Inspections	....	....	....	2254
Statutory notices issued	....	....	....	8
Statutory notices attended to	....	....	....	8
Preliminary notices issued	....	....	....	142
Preliminary notices outstanding from previous year				17
Preliminary notices—work completed	....			137
Preliminary notices—work in progress		....		17
Smoke testing of drains	....	....	....	123
Defective drains	....	....	....	137
House drains trapped	....	....	....	34
House drains repaired, cleansed or reconstructed				172
Slopstone waste pipes disconnected	....	...		9
Slopstone waste pipes repaired	....	....		69
Downspouts reconstructed, disconnected or trapped				176
Surface of yards repaired	....	....	....	33
Soil pipes repaired	....	....	....	5
Main drains repaired	....	....	....	6
Main drains reconstructed	....	....	....	6
Ventilation shafts to sewers and drains fixed	....			7
Houses fumigated after infectious diseases	....			56
Schools fumigated	....	....	....	4
Samples of water taken for analysis	....	....		16
Inspection of refuse tips	....	....	....	288
New domestic water supplies	....	....		4

With the exception of the slight increase in the general death rate and in the infantile mortality rate, the year's record is a good one and

indicative of the sound sanitary condition of your district and of continued sanitary progress.

The summary of sanitary work performed during the year represents much energy on the part of your Sanitary Inspector and the continued zealous performance of the duties devolving upon him.

The position of your district bears favourable comparison with any other district of similar physical features and climatic conditions.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

J. ROBINSON, M.D. (Brux.), L.S.Sc. (Univ. Durham),
Medical Officer of Health.

“ ROCKFIELD,”

DUNSCAR, Nr. Bolton,

April 20th, 1921.

